Mr. A. Madhava Prabhu *(Diwan Peishkar)*: The Act has not been amended. The Act is what it was.

Mr. C. V. Iyyu *(Kunnamkulam)*: If a request for the erection of a place of worship is neither accepted nor rejected within 90 days, the previous custom was to erect it.

Mr. A. Madhava Prabhu *(Diwan Peishkar)*: There is no such thing.

Mr. C. V. Iyyu *(Kunnamkulam)*: In the Act there was a clear provision that within 90 days if a reply is not received, the construction can be done.

Mr. A. Madhava Prabhu *(Diwan Peishkar)*: There was a rule before and that was ultra vires

Mr. C. V. Iyyu *(Kunnamkulam)*: So, there was a rule and that rule has been removed.

CUT MOTION No. 8

Raising the status and emoluments of Village officers

Mr. V. J. Mathai *(Panters)*: The cut motion is *to reduce the allotment of Rs.90, 979 A. Establishment——Salaries by Re. 1.* The object is to bring to the notice of the Government the need for raising the status and emoluments of the Village Officers.

Sir, this matter has been discussed at great length several times in the House and I was always feeling that the House was sympathetic to the Village Officers. The Village Menons get Rs. 16 and Parvathiams Rs. 18. Every one of us knows the multifarious duties that devolve upon the Menons and Parvathiams.

The cry is that, as I once termed the Diwan Peishkar as the residuary officer of the State, likewise these officers are residuary officers, if anything comes up and if there is no department for it, it is shunted on to the Diwan Peishkar. For instance, food production, Civil Supplies, etc., all were with the Diwan Peishkar. If a man applies for being recruited to the I. C. S., it is sent to the Diwan peishkar. The Diwan Peishkar sends it to the Tahsildar and the Tahsildar sends it to the Village Officers. The Village Officers have to make the enquiries and send the report. Over and above these, there is the survery work and fixing of boundaries. The further fact is that they do not get any proper batta when they travel to the Treasury. I am told they are given next to nothing. In these days of scarcity a meal costs 8 annas or more. So, you can understand the cry of these people. At least they should be given Rs. 30 to raise their status. When their status and emoluments are improved there should be certain qualifications prescribed for future. recruitment. The reason is self-evident. They have got an association. That association by a resolution have stated all their grievances. I find them just but I don't state them now for want of time. When you give great responsibilities to officers, unless you give them the wherewithal to maintain themselves, the public will suffer. You must remember that these officers are situated beyond the reach of the eyes of the Superior Officers. There are several matters in which they can supplement their income. Does Government expect them to do that? If you expect them to be uncorrupt and incorruptable and if you expect people not to be troubled by these officers, please, raise their income and status. Therefore it is more on behalf of the agricultural population than on behalf of the Village Menons and Parvathiams that I raise this cry for the discussion and acceptance of the House.

Mr. V. K. Bhaskara Menon *(Cranganur)*: May I know from the Hon'ble Member whether he wants to limit it to Parvathiams and Menons and whether he wants to include the Masapidies and peons.

Mr. V. J. Mathai *(Planters)*: I am thankful to the Hon'ble Member for Cranganur. I have no objection to include Masapadies and Peons also.

Mr. P. Kumaran Ezhuthassan *(Vadakkancheri)*: This is a subject, Sir, which ought to engage the serious attention of this House and I am confident that it will be viewed with the seriousness that the proposition demands. This is a subject wnich touches the emoluments of 343 officers of the State Machinery and as conceded in reply to the question of the Hon'ble Member for Cranganur the Hon'ble mover of the cut prepared to take within the purview of this cut motion the menials also, it is a proposition which affects not 343 but 689 paid servants of the Government of Cochin inclusive of menials. If you dispute the figures the information is contained at pages 29 and 30 of the Budget that is put into our hands. I would prefer, Sir, a change in the sequence of the words of the cut. Here the cut reads "the need for raising the status and emoluments of Village Officers". I would have preferred to have it "the need for raising the moluments and thereby the status of Village Officers", because in the State there is a feeling that the status of an officer whether it be low or high, is measured by the salary that is

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attached to the post. Personally, I don't endorse that view, but still that is the feeling of the public at large.

Now to come to the merits of the cut. As I submitted before, Sir, being a subject which affects the emoluments of as many as 689 officers, 346 of them getting only Rs. 10, 71 getting Rs. 20, 82 getting Rs. 18, 148 getting Rs. 16 and 39 getting Rs. 15.

Therefore on a look at the large number of Government Servants affected anybody would be pleased to find that it is a matter which requires serious and sympathetic consideration. I am helped by my friend the Hon'ble Member for Cranganur. He wants not only sympathetic consideration but effective consideration and effective consideration at the earliest possible date. That is the position which may impress any onlooker of this proposition at the first sight. Really it deserves sympathetic consideration and responsive consideration at the earliest date. The arguments advanced by the Hon'ble Mover regarding the onerous duties that these Village Officers have to perform have been, and in a very illuminating way embodied in the notes of no less a person than one of our Hon'ble Judges of the High Court, than a member of this council and a member of the Special Finance Committee—I refer to the then Hon'ble Member, Mr. C. A. Kunjunny Raja who was in his days a very forceful member of this House. He has embodied in that report the various duties of these low-paid classes of officers. But in spite of that illuminating report, when orders were passed on the Finance Committee Report the case of these officers was not favourably considered. Then came the time when the office of Diwan Peishkar was filled by another very able servant of the Government—I am referring to the days of the Diwan Peishkar Mr. T. M. Krishna Menon. During his time, Sir, this House being not satisfied with the orders passed with regard to the emoluments of these officers pressed their case hard as is now attempted to be done through this cut motion and the present pay is the result of the revision that followed such pressure. It was revised as a result of the attempt on the part of the Members of this House in that behalf. On behalf of the Village officers, the Members of this House have been exerting and forcing the hands of the Government. Please do not misunderstand. It was the benevolence of the Government to accept the recommendations of this House on behalf of these officers. The present demand is that their emoluments be further increased. Whether the House should vote and give its consent for that or not is the question. I submit, Sir, belonging to the party which is a part of the administration, as a matter of policy adapted and attempted to be put through, the party will not launch upon any peacemeal revision of pay whether it be to the good of the recipients, *viz.* increase of emoluments or whether it be to their disadvantages, *i.e.*, reduction of salary of the fat salaried men. To whichever class this attempt may belong, as part of the Government the party cannot endorse the view that a peacemeal revision of the salary of a particular class of officers either to increase or to reduce their emoluments can be attempted by Government. It is in that predicament and not in a spirit of opposition that I, as the spokesman of the party, have the painful duty cast upon me to oppose the motion in the form in which it is put forward.

Mr. A. V. Moothedan *(Chalakkudi)*: You are going to oppose?

Mr. P. Kumaran Ezhuthassan *(Vadakkancheri)*: Well, if my Hon'ble friend for Chalakkudi could not divine the line of my argument, I am only sorry. The moment I get up and begin my argument the line of argument will show where the wind is blowing. As an Hon'ble representative of this House and as an experienced Advocate, if the Hon'ble Member has not been able to understand as yet I am only sorry. Therefore, Sir, as a consistent policy to be followed by this limb of the Government—I make myself proud to call my party as such and I am sure any other party in power must be proud to call itself—we in this predicament Sir have to oppose this motion as brought. Let it be made clear, Sir, that the party position is not that the proposition does not commend itself to us namely the necessity for increasing the emoluments of these hard worked officers who have got a legion of work to perform, but that the attempt at piecemeal increasing or decreasing the emoluments of any portion of the machinery of the Government is something which is fraught with difficulties of various types. Therefore in that spirit and that spirit alone, and not that we are not in sympathy with the various valuable and necessary representations of the village establishment. We as a party are constrained to oppose the cut just at present. We have to wait for a time to take up the revision of pay of Government servants. We have to take up the matter as a whole and not piecemeal—to retrench where retrenchment is necessary and to increase where increase is necessary or called for.

Mr. K. S. Panicker *(Ezhuvas-Mukundapuram)*: Sir, on a point of order

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കൌൺസിലിൽ ഒരു മെമ്പർ പ്രസംഗിച്ചുകൊണ്ടിരിക്കുമ്പോൾ ചില മെമ്പർമാർ ഇതു മാതിരി സംസാരിച്ചുകൊണ്ടിരിക്കുന്നതു ശരിയല്ല.

Mr. V. J. Mathai *(Planters)*: I am perfectly in order, Sir. I have seen the Hon'ble C. Rajagopalachari crossing over the Treasury Bench and speaking to Mr. Muthia Chettiar while discussion is going on in the Assembly. Such things are necessary. I was discussing whether it should be put to the vote or not. Consistent with my respect to the chair, I must say we are not playing.

Mr. P. Kumaran Ezhuthassan *(Vadakkancheri)*: Now, Sir, I wish to make an observation on what the Hon'ble Member for Planters said just now. The observation may not be quite relevant to the motion. Because of the point of order raised by no less a person than a responsible member of my party and because of the very helpful reply given by no less a person than a Parliamentarian like the Hon'ble Member for Planters I have to put in one word. The Hon'ble Member for Planters was referring to Sree. C. Rajagopalachari, the great Premier of Madras crossing over the floor and going to a particular member of the opposition. I might inform the House, Sir, that I had the proud privilege of sitting in the President's gallery for all the days of the Assembly Session to see the deliberations of the first Madras Assembly in the year in which it was started and then I saw, Sir, the beautiful sight of members even, not only the Minister and the Chief Minister, but members also leaving their seats and going to their friends in this block and that block. Therefore it may not be out of order if an Hon'ble Member comes from that side to this side but there is a condition. The Hon'ble Members can leave their seats and go anywhere they like to go. But the conversation these Hon'ble Members indulge in should never be of the slightest disturbance to the person in possession of the House or to the deliberations of the House. Not that I am disturbed by any conversation anywhere. But a point of order was raised by a friend of mine and it was pertinently refused by another particular friend of mine. This is only a side remark by the way.

Now to the position that I was taking up. Not that we are not in sympathy with what is asked for because these officers deserve consideration but we find governmental difficulties in launching upon this piecemeal reorganisation of the emoluments. We, as a party, as a limb of the Government only desire to run the Government smoothly, efficiently and effectively and we want to tell the Reserved half that the Transferred half and the party which is in the responsible position of running the ministry, is always co-operating with them where co-operation is necessary and to be able to take a different stand when that is necessary. To establish this and to see that the machinery of the Government is not troubled by piecemeal attempt of emoluments being increased or decreased we, as a party, consistently with the policy of that party are now constrained to oppose this motion. That is the party's view. This is an information for the Government too.

Mr. V. K. Bhaskara Menon *(Cranganur)*: May I ask the Hon'ble Member that his case is that by a revision of the emoluments of these underpaid underdogs of the Government the whole machinery of the Government would crumble down or that the smooth working of the Government will suffer or that the co-operation now existing between the reserved and the transferred half will be suffering?

Mr. P. Kumaran Ezhuthassan *(Vadakkancheri)*: I shall feel it a privilege to reply my Hon'ble friend. I know the spirit in which the question was put. The question whether an attempt at increasing the emoluments of these underdogs of the department, a most appropriate expression to be used, would upset the smooth working of the machinery. That question answers itself. Certainly the Hon'ble Member has answered himself. The position is this. As emphasised by me a piecemeal attempt at increasing or decreasing the emoluments of any portion of the machinery of Government is fraught with difficulties. Therefore we must bide our time and take the earliest opportunity of revising the emoluments of all officers increasing wherever necessary and decreasing also wherever necessary. Such a policy can be taken up at the earliest possible convenient opportunity. In that view let us not be misunderstood for opposing the present cuts. I think I have sufficiently answered the querry.

Mr. A. V. Moothedan *(Chalakkudi)*: The Hon'ble Member for Vadakkancheri with a long apologia was forced to oppose this motion. But I simply oppose the motion.

Mr. P. Kumaran Ezhuthassan *(Vadakkancheri)*: That is the difference between us.

Mr. A. V. Moothedan *(Chalakkudi)*: I do not waste the time of the House. Not that I have not sympathy for the village officers or their sufferings. As stated by the Hon'ble Member for Planters, these village officers form a part of the establishment. There are so many menials.

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Their salary is very petty. They are paid 8 annas per day and they have to go to Malayattur and other places. The bus charge comes to one rupee. Is not their case pitiable. Then Police Constables. Then other peons, Their salary is Rs. 12 to Rs. 15 and this form as part of a big establishment of Government Officers or menials. Their salary requires to be revised and I should say the earliest opportunity should be taken for revising their pay. Along with this also should be taken into consideration.

Mr. V. K. Bhaskara Menon *(Cranganur)*: May I know, Sir, what objection is there in increasing the pay of the officers of this category?

Mr. A. V. Moothedan *(Chalakkudi)*: What is the special significance for satisfying this class of officers alone?

Mr. V. K. Bhaskara Menon *(Cranganur)*: That is the only motion now before the House.

Mr. A. V. Moothedan *(Chalakkudi)*: There are altogether 2,000 people and here there are only 300 people. Why should we revise the salary of these alone? You have established a case that the salary of the 2,000 people should not be revised and you say that the pay of the 300 only should be revised. You give the reason.

Mr. A. Madhava Prabhu *(Diwan Peishkar)*: This matter has been agitated by the village officers themselves through the medium of an association which they have recently formed with the permission of the Government. In the memorandum which they have submitted for the amelioration of their position both for the enhancement of their salary and status and also for giving them a little more of daily allowance and all that, they have exhausted almost all the grievances which they want the Government to redress at present. The matter has not been disposed of by Government. The matter is under the consideration of the Government. When that matter is being considered all the views for and against this proposition which have been just now placed before this House will be considered and a proper decision, it is hoped, will be arrived at. But if the motion is pressed to a division at this stage we have no other alternative but to oppose it.

Mr. V. J. Mathai *(Planters)*: So far as I am concerned the cause is greater than the success of a manage. I may make it clear that many are watching this discussion 690 and odd are thinking that their fate is being discussed. This is a solemn matter. The view point of the ministerial party I can really understand and if I were inclined to work this up as a party manoeuvre I can press and put then in a difficulty. The object is to show the sense of the House in this matter. I am glad the Hon'ble the Diwan Peishkar has understood the sense of the House. I may make it clear the press representatives here may really put the matter in the line of the discussion.

(1) that the sense of the House was unanimous.

(2) that the ministerialist party was in complete support of the proposition but for particular reasons caused by certain exigencies they could not now vote for it.

(3) the Government while being sympathetic also expressed that since the matter is under consideration I should not press the motion and get an adverse vote.

In the interest of the village officers I request leave of the House to withdraw the motion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn

CUT MOTION No. 9

Exemption from Tolls—Officers of Transferred Departments

Mr. K. S. Panicker *(Ezhuvas-Mukundapuram)*: My motion is to *reduce the allotment of Rs. 2,39,043 for Land Revenue by Re. 1, to request the Covernment the necessity of exempting all touring officers of the transferred Departments from paying Revenue tolls.*

സർ, വളരെക്കാലമായി പഞ്ചായത്തുകാർ, പബ്ലിക്ക്ഹെൽത്ത് ഉദ്യോഗസ്ഥന്മാർ, കൃഷിവകുപ്പ് ഉദ്യോഗസ്ഥന്മാർ ഇങ്ങനെയുള്ളവരെ ചുങ്കം കൊടുക്കുന്ന കാര്യത്തിൽനിന്ന് ഒഴിവാക്കിട്ടുണ്ട്. ഒരു പഞ്ചായത്തു മെമ്പറെ നിർബന്ധിച്ച് ചുങ്കക്കാരൻ ചുങ്കം വാങ്ങി എന്നുള്ള നിലയിൽ ആ ചുങ്കം ലേലക്കാരനു ഫൈൻ പിഴയിട്ട ഈ ഗവർമ്മെണ്ട് ഇപ്പോൾ പഞ്ചായത്തു മെമ്പറുടെ അടുക്കൽനിന്നല്ല, പഞ്ചായത്തു പ്രസിഡണ്ടിന്റെ കയ്യിൽനിന്നും, വില്ലേജുകോട്ട് ജഡ്ജിമാരുടെ പക്കൽ നിന്നുംകൂടി ചുങ്കം പിരിക്കുവാൻ അനുവദിച്ചിരിക്കുകയാണ് ചെയ്തിട്ടുള്ളത്. വളരെക്കാലായി നടന്നുവന്നിരുന്ന ഒരു ഏർപ്പാട് ഇങ്ങിനെ പെട്ടന്നു നിറുത്തൽ ചെയ്തരിക്കയാണ്. ഈ ടറിംഗ് ആഫീസർമാരേ കൊച്ചിരാജ്യ

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